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ACTION COPY 66

INCOMING TELEGRAM Department of State

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NNNNVZCZCMJB711JIA151
PP RUEHC
DE RUMJIR 2859Ø/1 1731140
ZNY SSSSS
P R 221102Z JUN 67
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY
INFOV UHHHQA/C INCPAC
STATE GRNC
BT
S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 SAIGON 2859Ø

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY Ivan Iguberg DATE 10/7/81
PORTIONS DENIED AS INDICATED 818601

JUN 22 AM 9 59

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

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REF: STATE 212926; STATE 212735

1. DURING CALL ON FOREIGN MINISTER JUNE 21, POLITICAL COUNSELOR SAIDWE HAD HEARD THAT AMBASSADOR [redacted] WAS RETURNING TO SAIGON. DO REMARKED THAT HE HAD JUST TALKED WITH HIM ON THE PHONE AND WOULD BE SEEING HIM LATER. HIS EXPLANATION FOR [redacted]'S RETURN WAS LATTER HAD NEVER MADE HIS OFFICIAL FAREWELLS HERE AND WAS RETURNING PRIMARILY FOR THIS PURPOSE.

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DO ADDED THAT HE UNDERSTOOD [redacted] WAS BEING ASSIGNED ELSEWHERE AND WOULD NOT BE REMAINING HERE LONG. HE CONFIRMED THAT HE HAD SEEN [redacted] DURING HIS STOPOVER ON THE WAY TO GENEVA AND THAT [redacted] HAD ACCOMPANIED HIM ON HIS CALL.

2. DO WAS SOMEWHAT EVASIVE ABOUT WHY [redacted] CAME BACK SO SUDDENLY AND HIS SUBSEQUENT COMMENTS SUPPORTED SUPPOSITION CONTAINED STATE 212926 THAT DO MIGHT HOPE TO USE HIS SKILLS ON INTERNAL POLITICAL SCENE.

3. DO PNNCO LAUNCHED BAKAO A LENGTHY AND MORE THAN USUALLY EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION OF HIS FAMILIAR VIEWS ABOUT PRIME MINISTER KY. DO SAID AT ONE POINT IN HIS REMARKS THAT GENERAL THIEU HAD ASKED HIM TO BECOME HIS VICE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE BUT THAT HE HAD DECIDED AGAINST THIS. HE WAS CONVINCED, HOWEVER, THAT GENERAL THIEU WOULD DEFINITELY BE A CANDIDATE.

4. DO SPOKE MOST BITTERLY ABOUT KY'S USE OF "SECRET POLICE"

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METHODS AND DOUBLING OF GVN FOREIGN SERVICE WITH OFFICIALS SUBJECT TO LOAN'S CONTROL. DO SAID HE SAW NO HOPE OF A GOVERNMENT EMERGING FRO THE ELECTIONS UNDER PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH COULD IN ANY WAY BE SAID TO REPRESENT THE VIETNAMESE PEOPLE, AND HE FEARED A REPETITION OF THE DIEM REGIME. ALL THIS HE HAD SAID BEFORE IN ONE FORM OR ANOTHER, BUT HE NOW ADDED THAT HE COULD NO LONGER WORK WITH KY AND HAD JUST DECIDED THAT HE WOULD RESIGN HIS POSITION AND PROBABLY FILE AS ACANDIDATE FOR THE UPPER HOUSE. HE CITED EXAMPLES WHERE HE ALLEGED KY HAD BY HIMSELF TAKEN VERY MAJOR DECISIONS AFFECTING THE ENTIRE GOVERNMENT WITHOUT CONSULTATION WITH THE CABINET. HE MENTIONED AS ONE OF THE MORE RECENT ONES, THE IMPORTANT DECISION TO RETURN THE CHINESE CONGREGATION PROPERTIES TO THE CHINESE COMMUNITY. DO SAID THAT IN ANY CASE HE COULD NOT IN GOOD CONSCIENCE CONTINUE IN THE GOVERNMENT. IF HE WAS TO RUN FOR THE UPPER HOUSE HE MUST FILE WITHIN THE NEXT 9 DAYS. HE SAID THAT HE HAD NOT YET TALKED TO KY AND OF COURSE PLANNED TO DO SO, BUT HE SOUNDED QUITE FINAL IN TERMS OF HIS OWN DECISION.

5. IN SUBSEQUENT CONVERSATION WITH [ ], LATTER CONFIRMED

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FACT THAT THE ONLY REASON HE CAME BACK WAS BECAUSE OF TRAN VAN DO'S URGENT REQUEST. [ ] HAD AGREED THAT IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES [ ] SHOULD RETURN HERE FOR BRIEF PERIOD. [ ] HAD JUST SEEN DO FOLLOWING POLITICAL COUNSELOR'S TALK WITH HIM AND SAID IT WAS INDEED THE INTERNAL POLITICAL SITUATION WHICH WAS THE SOLE REASON FOR DO'S REQUEST. [ ] ADDED THAT HE WISHED TO MAKE CLEAR TO US THAT HE WOULD NOT DO ANYTHING HERE THAT WAS NOT HELPFUL TO THE U.S. AND SAID THAT HIS STAY WOULD BE FOR A MAXIMUM OF TWO WEEKS. OSTENSIBLE REASON WILL BE AS STATED BY DO, NAMELY TO MAKE HIS FARWELLS. (HE WAS ABOUT TO BE APPOINTED AS AN UNDER SECRETARY IN FOREIGN MINISTRY WHEN DO'S MESSAGE WAS RECEIVED.)

6. [ ] ADDED THAT HE WAS STRUCK WITH THE MOOD OF DISCOURAGEMENT BORDERING ON DESPARATION IN WHICH HE FOUND DO. HE ADDED THAT HE WOSLD BE LESS THAN FRANK IF HE DID NOT SAY

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THAT HIS PERSONAL FEELINGS WERE IN SYMPATHY WITH DO AS HE WAS CONVINCED THAT "OUR LITTLE BONAPARTE" WILL DESTROY MUCH OF WHAT HAS BEEN ACCOMPLISHED AND PERHAPS LEAD VIET-NAM INTO

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REPETITION OF A DIEM REGIME. [redacted] REITERATED, HOWEVER, THAT HE WOULD NOT GET INVOLVED IN THE SITUATION IF IT WOULD NOT BE HELPFUL TO THE U.S. POLITICAL COUNSELOR INDICATED THAT WE WERE FULLY AWARE OF WHAT WAS GOING ON AND OF THE FEELINGS OF DO AND OTHER POLITICAL LEADERS. HE ADDED THAT THE PROBLEM WAS ONE WE WOULD HAVE TO DEAL WITH OURSELVES TO EXTENT OUR INTERESTS ARE INVOLVED, BUT THAT WE WERE GRATEFUL FOR [redacted] DESIRE TO BE HELPFUL, AND OF COURSE VALUED HIS VIEWS BASED ON HIS LONG EXPERIENCE HERE AND HIS FRIENDLY ATTITUDE TOWARD U.S.

7. I HAD A LONG TALK WITH [redacted] IN WHICH HE WENT OVER VERY MUCH THE SAME GROUND. HE PARTICULARLY STRESSED HIS CONCERN AT DO'S STATE OF MIND. I DESCRIBED TO HIM IN SOME DETAIL THE BACKGROUND TO THE PRESENT SITUATION AND SOME OF THE EFFORTS WE HAD BEEN MAKING TO PREVENT THINGS FROM DETERIORATING BEYOND CONTROL. HE REAFFIRMED TO ME HIS DESIRE TO BE OF HELP IF HE COULD.

8. COMMENT: IF DO FOLLOWS THROUGH ON HIS INTENTION TO RESIGN

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AND RUN FOR THE UPPER HOUSE IT WILL NOT SURPRISE MOST INFORMED VIETNAMESE AND THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS SINCE HE HAS BEEN FRANK AND FREQUENT IN MAKING HIS FEELINGS KNOWN ABOUT KY AND IN SHOWING HIS PERSONAL PREFERENCE FOR THIEU. DEPENDING ON WHAT HE SAYS PUBLICLY IN ANNOUNCING HIS DECISION, HOWEVER, IT CAN GIVE A CONSIDERABLE BOOST TO THE OPPOSITION GROUPS WHICH HAVE BECOME INCREASI GLY RESTIVE UNDER KY'S OPEN CAMPAIGNING, THE GVN'S LIBERAL USE OF CENSORSHIP, AND THE GROWING TALK OF POLICE PRESSURES UNDER GENERAL LOAN TO INFLUENCE THE ELECTION

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OUTCOME AT PROVINCIAL AND LOCAL LEVELS. NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DEBATE ON JUNE 20 (SAIGON 28490) BROUGHT SOME OF THESE FEELINGS AND CRITICISMS OUT INTO THE OPEN AND WE CAN ANTICIPATE THAT THIS WILL CONTINUE.

BUNKER
BT

*AS RECEIVED, WILL BE SERVICED UPON REQUEST

NOTE: PASSED S/S-O, WHITE HOUSE 6-22-67 10:25 a.m.

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ACTION COPY

SECRET

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Action

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Info

P R 221102Z JUN 67
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY
INFO RUHHHQA/CINCPAC
STATE GRNC
BT
S E C R E T FINAL SECTION OF 2 SAIGON 28590

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9. I AM PLANNING TO SEE THE FOREIGN MINISTER SOON AS I HAVE NOT HAD AN OCCASION FOR A LENGTHY TALK WITH HIM SINCE HIS RETURN FROM EUROPE. I ALSO EXPECT TO FOLLOW UP AGAIN WITH KY ON THE MATTER OF A DECLARAT ON REGARDING MILITARY NON-INVOLVEMENT IN THE ELECTIONS WHICH WE DISCUSSED AT LUNCHEON (SXFGON 28409) AND TO CONTINUE MY DISCUSSION OF JUNE 14 REGARDING MEASURES NEEDED TO ASSURE THAT THE ELENTIONS ARE FAIR AND HONEST (SAIGON 28090).

10. DEPT WILL HAVE SEEN [redacted] WHICH REPORTS KY'S DESCRIPTION OF MEASURES HE IS CONTEMPLATING TO OVERCOME THE GROWING IMPRESSION THAT HE IS RIGGING THE ELECTIONS./ IT IS ENCOURAGING TO HEAR THAT KY MAY BE EMBARKING ON A PLAN OF ACTION TO CURB THE ZEAL OF LOAN AND TO GIVE REASSURANCES THAT THE ELECTIONS WILL BE HONEST, BUT IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN WHETHER THESE ACTIONS ARE GIVEN REAL EFFECT AND ARE SUFFICIENT.

11. DO'S MOVE TO RESIGN, IF TAKEN, WILL CERTAINLY POSE A NUMBER OF DIFFICULTIES FOR KYBN ESPECIALLY IN THE PUBLIC RETATIONS SPHERE. WE HAVE KNOWN, OF COURSE, THAT KY HAS FREQUENTLY BEEN UNHAPPY ABOUT DO INT EHE PAST AND IT MAY BE THAT HE WILL PRIVATELY WELCOME HIS RESIGNATION PROVIDED HE BELIEVES THAT HE CAN HANDLE THE MATTER PUBLICLY IN A WAY THAT DOES NOT DAMAGE HIS IMAGE UNDULY. HE WILL RECOGNIZE, HOWEVER, THAT THE DEPARTURE OF DO AND HIS MOVE INTO OPPOSITION WILL BE TROUBLESOME TO EXPLAIN SINCE DO IS WIDELY KNOWN AND RESPECTED. BOTH WITHIN VIETNAM AND OUTSIDE.

12. FROM OUR VIEWPOINT, DO'S RESIGNATION WILL BE A SERIOUS LOSS

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IN TERMS OF EFFECTIVE DEALINGS WITH THE GVN ON A WIDE VARIETY OF INTERNATIONAL ISSUES.
EVEN THOUGH DO WAS INCREASINGLY LIMITED IN HIS INFLUENCE ON KY, HE HAS ON OCCASION ASSUMED RESPONSIBILITY HIMSELF FOR DECISIONS WHICH KY MIGHT NOT HAVE FAVORED, AND IT IS UNLIKELY THAT ANYONE REPLACING HIM WILL BE PREPARED OR ABLE TO DO THIS. ON TERMS OF THE INTERNAL POLITICAL SITUATION, DO'S RESIGNATION IS LIKELY TO STIR UP FURTHER AND MORE VOCAL DISCONTENT AGAINST THE KY REGIME AMONG THE POLITICAL OPPOSITION AND TO INCREASE THE DIVISIONS WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT ITSELF. DO'S PRPOSES WILL UNDOUBTEDLY BE TO FOCUS PUBLIC ATTENTION ON THE OPPOSITION TO KY. PRESUMABLY HE HOPES ALSO TO BRING PRESSURE ON US TO TAKE MORE OPEN SIDES ON THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS.

BUNKER
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NOTE: ADVANCE COPY DELIVERED TO S/S-O 6/22/67 3:17 PM.
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